

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 3, 4 and 7 have been amended. After entry of the claim amendments, claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 will be pending in this application. Claim 8 has been previously withdrawn.

No new matter is being presented, and approval of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

On page 2 of the Action, claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are rejected as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Specifically, the Examiner states that it is unclear what “type(s)”, as recited in the claims, is intended to convey.

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 7 are amended to replace the word “type(s)” with “set(s)” in order to further clarify certain features recited therein. For example, the information database group 40 (see Fig. 1) includes, as exemplary sets of information, a position/telephone information database 41, a traffic information database 42 and a weather forecast database 43.

It is submitted, therefore, that the claims as amended particular point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. As a result, the rejections are respectfully overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

On pages 2-7 of the Action, claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are rejected as being unpatentable over Ohtsuji et al. (U.S. 2002/0156570 A1) (hereinafter “Ohtsuji”) in view of Morimoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,351,706) (hereinafter “Morimoto”). The rejections are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. The following is a comparison between embodiments of the present invention and the cited references.

Amended independent claim 1, for example, is directed to an information providing apparatus for a vehicle comprising: an off-vehicle information storage device in which a plurality of different sets of information to be provided to a plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses, via a telephone line, are stored; a user information storage device; and an interactive voice response device configured to allow a user to customize audio guidance through an automatic voice response via the telephone line in order to store the customized audio guidance in the user

information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user. (See Figs. 1 and 3, of the present application, and the corresponding descriptions for support).

The Examiner notes that Ohtsuji fails to disclose an interactive voice response device configured to store the customized audio guidance in a user information storage device for use in subsequent dialogue with the user. Hence, the Examiner cites Morimoto as disclosing these features. Specifically, the Examiner cites column 3, lines 34-54, and column 4, lines 59-67, of Morimoto as teaching a vehicle navigation apparatus, in which a data storage unit (3) stores audio/guidance data necessary for route guidance, and a central processor (4) executes programs interactive with voice input through an input device (1).

Morimoto discloses speech conversation processing in a navigation apparatus (see column 3, lines 34-54 and 63-66). The data storage unit (3) described by Morimoto merely stores data required for computation of a geographical travel route, display/audio guidance data and application programs and/or operating systems. Morimoto, however, does not teach or suggest an interactive voice response device configured to allow a user to customize audio guidance through an automatic voice response via the telephone line in order to store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user. Morimoto does not disclose that a user information storage device is provided as part of the information providing apparatus for a vehicle, audio guidance is customized through an automatic voice response via the telephone line, and then the customized audio guidance is stored in the user information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user.

As a result, it is submitted that neither Ohtsuji nor Morimoto, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a user information storage device; and an interactive voice response device configured to allow a user to customize audio guidance through an automatic voice response via the telephone line in order to store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user, as recited in amended independent claim 1. The remaining independent claims, as amended, recite features substantially similar to those described above with reference to claim 1. Thus, it is further submitted that all independent claims, as well as the pending dependent claims, patentably distinguish over the cited art.

Conclusion

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 502624 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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